

Message Text

SECRET

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62

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SAM-01 SS-20

RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15

PRS-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /100 W

----- 036342

P R 150345Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0080

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MANILA

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 0697

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, SN, IS

SUBJ: DEPARTURE OF ISRAELI ADVISORY TEAM

1. WE HAVE BEEN ADVISED BY MEMBERS OF ISRAELI ADVISORY TEAM
IN SINGAPORE THAT DEFENSE MINISTER GOH HAS DECIDED TO
TERMINATE CONTRACT OF ALL REMAINING ISRAELI ADVISORS,
NOW NUMBERING 12, EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 17. NO DEADLINE
HAS BEEN SET FOR THEIR DEPARTURE, BUT REPORTEDLY
DR. GOH ASKED THEM TO DEPART AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HIS
EXPLANATION WAS THAT THEIR WORK HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND
THERE IS NO LONGER NEED THEM TO REMAIN. WE ARE TOLD
HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE IN HELPING
GOS DEVELOP ITS MILITARY CAPABILITY. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
EXPECTED FEBRUARY 17.

2. COMMENT: IT HAS BEEN CLEAR FOR SOME TIME THAT MINDEF
INTENDED TO PHASE-OUT ISRAELI ADVISORS GRADUALLY OVER
NEXT TWO YEARS AS THEIR TRAINING TASKS WERE COMPLETED.
THE ORIGINAL GROUP NUMBERED 42 AND HAS BEEN PROGRESSIVELY
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REDUCED OVER PAST YEAR TO 12. HOWEVER, ABRUPT MANNER IN

WHICH TERMINATION BEING ACCOMPLISHED RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THIS IS ANOTHER GESTURE TO CURRY FAVOR WITH THE ARABS. AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, FONMIN RAJARATNAM RETURNED FROM EXTENDED TRIP TO ARAB COUNTRIES THIS WEEK AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS MOVE IS A RESULT OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH ARAB LEADERS.

3. AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER, WHO HEARD THIS SAME NEWS FROM WHAT HE CONSIDERS A RELIABLE SOURCE, SAID THE SPECULATION IS THAT THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR MAY BE LEAVING AS WELL. WE HAVE NOTHING TO VERIFY THIS REPORT. MEMBER OF ISRAELI COMMERCIAL COMMUNITY HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS MAY BE NEXT STEP.

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